

## MEMORANDUM

**To: Members of University Council**  
**From: Amy Gutmann, President**  
**Date: December 2, 2015**  
**Subject: Report to the University Council**

---

Over a 24-hour period beginning Thursday, November 12th, heinous terrorist attacks were launched against the people of Paris, Baghdad, and Beirut. As the Penn community learned of these atrocities and joined the world in mourning, a University team was working hard to account for the safety of our students, faculty, and staff traveling abroad. By using Penn's Global Activities Registry and leveraging various University networks, we were able to confirm the safety of our students and colleagues in France and elsewhere swiftly.

We are so very thankful that, in the midst of such tragedy, Penn travelers abroad were unharmed. I commend Penn Global/Penn Abroad and everyone who responded quickly and compassionately to account for and safeguard members of our community, and who continue to support all of our students who have been affected by those terrible events. It is a privilege and a comfort to be part of a university family that has such heart and such deep commitment to one another.

As we enter the final weeks of the semester, I want to thank all University Council members for the essential roles you play in keeping this community strong. I also wish to conclude my report with well-deserved praise for our superb faculty and students. To cite just a few recent examples: Three more Penn faculty members have been elected members to the National Academy of Medicine, bringing Penn's total number of NAM faculty to 66. Formerly the Institute of Medicine, NAM is one of the nation's most prestigious groups for scholars in biomedicine, and being elected is one of the highest honors our biomedical faculty can receive. Hats off to Dennis Discher, the Robert D. Bent Professor of Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering in SEAS; Sean Hennessy, professor of Epidemiology in the Perelman School; and Frances Jensen, department chair and professor of Neurology in the Perelman School.

Congratulations as well to our four faculty members who have been named Fellows of the prestigious American Association for the Advancement of Science. In addition to Dennis Discher, Ted Abel, the Brush Family Professor of Biology in SAS; A.T. Charlie Johnson, director of Penn's Nano/Bio Interface Center and professor in the Department of Physics and Astronomy; and Mark Trodden, department chair and Fay R. and Eugene L. Langberg Professor of Physics, have all been honored for their distinguished contributions to the sciences.

We couldn't be more proud of seniors Jenna Hebert and Debi Ogunrinde, who have been named 2016 Rhodes Scholars. With this prestigious honor, both Jenna and Debi will pursue their graduate studies at Oxford University. We're also deeply proud of Philip Cohen, a third-year medical student at Perelman, and Carla Winter, a senior in SEAS, for earning George J. Mitchell Scholarships, which will support their graduate studies in Ireland or Northern Ireland.

The Penn community joins me in congratulating our Rhodes and Mitchell Scholars and all our finalists this year for a job exceedingly well done. I also want to congratulate Coach Priore and our fantastic Quakers football team on their Ivy League championship.

I wish you all great success in the last few weeks of classes and exams, and I hope you enjoy a pleasant and safe winter break.

## PROVOST'S STATUS REPORT

University Council

December 2015

This semester, at campuses around the country, we have seen ongoing, sometimes contentious discussions of a wide range of important issues. Here at Penn, we established the Campaign for Community last year to help us explore these very topics that might seem the most difficult, intractable, or controversial. We hope that such conversations will help all of us clarify and consider what matters most to us as a shared community. The Campaign began last spring with a Town Hall featuring six of our Deans considering "Having Difficult Conversations in the Academy." This first full semester of events has included a symposium on academic freedom; a conversation with Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright Ayad Akhtar at the Kelly Writers House about race, class, and religion in America; and an exhibit (ongoing through January) at the Arthur Ross Gallery of the work of the internationally renowned photographer Abbas, who documents religious practices in areas of global conflict. On December 3, the Campaign will welcome Zainab Hawa Bangura, the United Nations Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict, who will speak at the Law School about her work in the Middle East, especially in providing support and assistance to women in ethnic minorities and survivors of violence.

I encourage all of you to develop and propose events for the Campaign that are relevant to your constituencies. The Campaign Steering Committee offers grants to support such events, as well as partnerships for events that are already funded yet would make valuable contributions to the Campaign: <https://provost.upenn.edu/initiatives/campaign/grants>.

The Year of Media was recently announced as the academic theme for 2016-2017. Academic theme years have become an invaluable way to spotlight one of Penn's most distinctive qualities: the wide range of interdisciplinary inquiry on our campus. The Year of Media will encompass the diverse forms of media that are central to disciplines across our Schools, while also highlighting the specific importance of media in a presidential election year. Fittingly, then, the year will begin in New Student Orientation with a Penn Reading Project on the legendary film *Citizen Kane*. Often cited as one of the greatest films ever made, this Orson Welles drama underlines the role of media in shaping politics in America, along with such broader values as success, power, and aspiration.

We will soon announce the application process for grants to support events for the Year of Media. I also encourage all faculty and staff to consider serving as discussion leaders for the Penn Reading Project. Discussion leaders often tell us that this is one of the most rewarding ways to engage our students at the very beginning of their Penn experience, and I expect that this year's conversations about *Citizen Kane*, media, and American politics will prove particularly stimulating.

I hope that all of you have a wonderful end of the semester and a joyous holiday season.

Vincent Price  
Provost



# Undergraduate Assembly

UNIVERSITY of PENNSYLVANIA

University Council Status Report

12/2/15

1. **Penn Wellness:** Last month, UA Associate Member Ben Bolnik helped launch a new group called Penn Wellness. This umbrella organization will bring together mental health and wellness related student groups with representatives from different communities across campus. Moving forward, Penn Wellness will serve as a forum for event collaboration and discussion regarding mental health and wellness in the Penn community.
2. **UA Airport Shuttles:** To provide a low cost and convenient Thanksgiving travel option, the UA organized its annual airport shuttle service. On 11/24 and 11/25, Shuttles picked students up from the Upper Quad Gate and dropped off them off at the Philadelphia International Airport. We are happy to report that over 400 students purchased shuttle tickets.

Respectfully Submitted:

**Jane Meyer**

UA President ([president@pennua.org](mailto:president@pennua.org))

**Ray Clark**

UA Vice President ([vp@pennua.org](mailto:vp@pennua.org))



**Status Report- Penn Professional Staff Assembly  
November 11, 2015**

*The theme year for the PPSA is **Impact@Work***

- Our November event – Calm Clarity: Mindful Leadership Program was held today. It was a great success. We were able to host 60 staff members with over another hundred on a waitlist. There is a continued demand for this type of stress management programming and leadership development. We hope to continue with a series next year in collaboration with Central HR.
- As a direct result of the recent memo from the President on Sexual Assault and Sexual Misconduct at Penn, PPSA in collaboration with WPPSA and the input of the EVP's Office and the Division of Human Resources have organized an event on December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2015 from 12-1pm, titled "Recognizing and Responding to Interpersonal Violence on Campus." Opening remarks will be given by Vice Provost Beth Winkelstein. Speakers Jessica Mertz, Director of Sexual Violence Prevention and Patricia Brennan, Director of Special Services at DPS will lead an interactive workshop for all staff on policies and resources related to this topic. A light lunch will be served.
- December is also the month for our Annual Clothing Drive. This year we continue our partnerships with the Bethesda Project (benefiting homeless men), Dress for Success (benefiting women with business attire) and Cradles to Crayons (benefiting children and families). The drive will run December 1<sup>st</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> at several locations across campus. Please check out our website for a location nearest you. We are hoping to collect even more items surpassing last year's amount of just over 1500 pounds!
- PPSA together with the Jack Heuer, Vice President of Human Resources, is piloting a small group discussions platform on a monthly basis beginning November. Three to four staff members are invited to meet with the Vice President to create lines of communication and foster open dialogue around issues of staff concern.

Respectfully submitted,

Lucia DiNapoli  
Chair, PPSA

Emma Grigore  
Past Chair, PPSA

Kuan Evans  
Chair Elect, PPSA



## Weekly Paid Professional Staff Assembly

November 19, 2015

Weekly Paid Professional Staff Assembly (WPPSA)

<http://www.upenn.edu/wpsa/>

Status Report for December 2015

- Our November, Speaker Series kicked off with a great start. Our invited speaker was Ralph De Lucia, Associate Director at The office of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity Programs our talk was Titled “*Unconscious Bias in the Workplace*” Recognizing micro- aggressions and the messages they send. We had a great turnout and have had many requests for a part two.
- Our November general membership meeting titled *Community Service* was held Tuesday, November 17. The meeting slogan was “*For better unity help our community.*” Our Invited guest speaker was Isabel Mapp, Associate Director at the Netter Center for Community Partnerships. Isabel spoke about the many opportunities of community service and the importance of volunteers in the coming months.
- On December 10, 2015 WPPSA and PPSA, will host a Special Staff Workshop titled “*Recognizing and Responding to Interpersonal Violence on Campus.*” Our invited speakers are Jessica Mertz, Director of Sexual Violence Prevention and Patricia Brennan, Director of Special Services at DPS. Vice Provost Beth Winkelstein, will give the opening remarks.

Submitted by,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rosa M. Vargas".

Rosa M. Vargas  
WPPSA Chair

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Irene Tan".

Irene Tan  
WPPSA Co-Chair